

GOD MADE JESUS LORD AND MESSIAH

Acts 2:22-41

Key Verse: 2:36

“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”

As we learned last week, when the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples at Pentecost, they began to proclaim the wonders of God in many different languages. People were utterly amazed when the uneducated disciples spoke the foreign languages fluently. Others thought they had too much wine. In today's passage, the Apostle Peter continues to explain what was happening. The focus of his message is Jesus' cross and resurrection. He also explains how the coming of the Holy Spirit is related to Jesus' exaltation to the right hand of God. Then he challenges his listeners to acknowledge that Jesus is Lord and Christ. May God help us to repent and accept Jesus as our Lord so that we may receive the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit!

I. GOD RAISED JESUS FROM THE DEAD (22-24)

A large crowd had gathered around the apostles at Pentecost to witness the unusual event. They wanted to understand what was happening. So they listened carefully what Peter said. Peter quoted the prophet Joel to explain the coming of the Holy Spirit. Then he began to speak about Jesus. He made a clear connection between the coming of the Holy Spirit and the cross and resurrection of Jesus. Look at verse 22. “Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know.” Jesus of Nazareth is the historical Jesus. He came from God. He entered time and space as a man, in human form. And he did the work of God. His miracles, wonders and signs showed that he was accredited by God. Once there was a paralytic who was lying on a mat. Out of his divine compassion, Jesus healed him. The man got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of the crowd. “This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, ‘We have never seen anything like this!’” (Mk 2:12). Another time, he rebuked a raging storm and the wind obeyed his word. He also fed 5,000 hungry people with only five loaves and two fish. Many people witnessed when he raised Lazarus from his tomb. The people could not deny that Jesus was sent by God.

Since Jesus came from God, they should have welcomed him, honored him, and treated him with respect. What did they do instead? Look at verse 23. “This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.” They crucified the Son of God. The Jewish religious leaders hated Jesus because they thought he threatened their political power base. They pressured Pilate to sentence him to death. They stirred up the crowd to shout, “Crucify him! Crucify him!” It was the greatest crime in human history. They acted as enemies of God. However, in all fairness, it was not only they, but all of us sinners are guilty of crucifying Jesus. A gospel song writer asks, “Were you there when

they crucified my Lord?” Yes, we were there. Yes, I was there. It was also my sin that crucified Jesus.

Yet Jesus was not a victim of human failures. Peter says in verse 23 that Jesus was handed over by God’s set purpose and foreknowledge. Jesus was crucified on the cross according to God’s will and his plan to save the world. Isaiah 53:10 says, “Yet it was the Lord’s will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the Lord makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand.” God used evil men to fulfill his own good purpose and offered Jesus as a sacrifice of atonement for the sin of the world. God loves the world. He sacrificed his own Son for sinners. Jesus willingly obeyed God’s purpose and offered himself as the Lamb of God.

Look at verse 24. “But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.” The resurrection of Jesus is the proof that our God is living and he keeps all his promises. Until that time, death had reigned over men like a heavyweight champion. The Emperor Chin of China didn’t want to die. He sent out several thousand young men in search of magical herb that would keep him alive. But he died. Everyone died. Because of the inevitability of death, men had to live with a sense of defeat and great fear. Like all other men in history, Jesus died. But Jesus did not remain in the tomb. It was impossible for death to keep its hold on Jesus, for Jesus is the Son of God. God raised Jesus from the dead. The almighty God raised Jesus to life. Jesus defeated the power of death and became the everlasting champion of life.

When God raised Jesus from the dead, God revealed that he is the Sovereign Ruler and the Living God. God revealed that his good purpose will triumph in history. He assured that he will keep his promise of eternal life in the kingdom of God. Because of Jesus’ resurrection, we can have a living hope in the kingdom of God. 1 Peter 1:3-4 says, “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade--kept in heaven for you....” Peter used to be a man of anxiety and fear. The power of death made him fearful and selfish. He even denied Jesus three times because of his fear. But Risen Christ freed him from the power of death through his resurrection. Peter became courageous and sacrificial. He became a good shepherd for God’s sheep. Likewise, we can become courageous men and women of faith when we have resurrection faith.

II. DAVID’S RESURRECTION FAITH (25-32)

Look at verses 25. David said about him: “I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.” Peter is talking about the resurrection of Jesus. So why does he quote what David said? King David was one of the greatest men in Israel’s history. He had many things to make him happy. He was king and had many beautiful wives. But there was a spiritual factor that made him great. After studying the psalms of David, Peter could understand the real secret of David’s victorious life. It was his resurrection faith. Peter quotes David in Psalm 16:8-11 to nail

down the truth that God raised Jesus from the dead according to the Scriptures. Look at verses 26-28 to see what David said: “Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will live in hope, because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.”

Actually, David’s life was not easy. As a teenager, he got a job under King Saul because of his musical talent. But after some women praised David more than Saul, King Saul became insanely jealous of David. He made David a political criminal and harassed him incessantly. His life was threatened constantly. He had to be on the run for his life. In many other ways as well, David suffered one hardship after another. One time, David returned with his men to their camp at Ziklag. The camp had been raided by Amalekites who had taken captive all their women and children. David was greatly distressed because his men were talking of stoning him out of their bitterness of spirit.

According to God’s will, David became king after Saul. But his life did not get easier. He faced constant warfare with enemies. He risked his life again and again to protect and serve his people as a good shepherd. His son Absalom rebelled against him and was killed by his own general. David wept bitterly for his son’s death. He knew that sooner or later death would overtake him too. But David found strength in God. He wrote many psalms in the middle of the night during times of trials. The real source of victory for David was his resurrection faith. He confessed that his body lived in hope. He knew that God would not abandon him to the grave.

Until this point in his psalm, David had been sharing personal testimony of God’s victory in his life. But in verse 27b, David says, “...nor will you let your Holy One see decay.” In this verse, “Holy One” refers to the Messiah. Peter explains in verse 31. “Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay.” Peter says that David foresaw the resurrection of the Christ. Jesus wouldn’t be born until 28 generations later in his lineage, but David was happy to foresee the resurrection of Jesus. David had resurrection faith. He was a king, warrior, poet, musician and shepherd. He was famous, wealthy and highly honored. But none of this gave him real and lasting joy. None of these things could save him from death. But through the resurrection of the Christ, he found living hope in the kingdom of God. This was his source of real joy.

Jesus Christ, the Holy One, the Messiah, did not see decay. He died for the sin of the world. But God raised him from the dead. God raised his body to life again; his body did not see decay. Peter and the other apostles were witnesses of the resurrection of Christ. What David saw with spiritual foresight, Peter and the other apostles witnessed in history as fact. Peter said exclaimed, “God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact.”

III. JESUS IS OUR LORD AND MESSIAH (33-36)

The resurrection of Christ was a historical fact of which Peter and the others were witnesses. Now Peter explains the relationship between the resurrection of Jesus and

the coming of the Holy Spirit. Look at verse 33. Peter said, “Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.” The Risen Christ was taken up to heaven and Peter saw it with his own eyes (1:9). The Risen Christ went to the throne of God. Now the Risen Christ is sitting at the right hand of God and reigns over all creation as Lord. But Jesus did not forget about us. As he promised, he poured out the Holy Spirit upon the apostles. And he still pours out the Holy Spirit upon us when we commit our lives to him.

Peter quoted another Psalm as the Scriptural basis for his proclamation. It was Psalm 110:1, the same Psalm that Jesus himself quoted to reveal his true identity during the Passion Week. Look at verses 34-35. For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, “The Lord said to my Lord: ‘Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.’” In this quotation, the same word “Lord” appears twice. But in Hebrew these are two different words. The first “Lord” is translated from “Jehovah” and refers to the one great God of Israel. The second “Lord” is translated from “Adonai” and refers to one greater than the speaker, in this case, David. Thus, “Adonai” refers to David’s Lord, that is, Christ. This affirms the deity of the Christ. So in this quotation, God Almighty is welcoming the Christ to sit at his right hand to reign as Lord and promising victory over all his enemies.

Look at verse 36. “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.” The same Jesus who walked on earth as a man had been raised from the dead and exalted to the right hand of God. Jesus is both Lord and Christ. He reigns over men and the world to bring about God’s victory over all evil and unrighteousness and over sin and death. As the angel told Mary at the birth of Jesus, “The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end” (Lk 1:32b,33). May God help each one of us to commit our life to Jesus who is both our Lord and Christ!

IV. REPENT AND BE BAPTIZED IN THE NAME OF JESUS (37-47)

Look at verse 37. “When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’” When the people heard Peter’s message, they were cut to the heart. The very Jesus whom they had crucified had been raised from the dead and exalted to the right hand of God. The testimony of Scripture and the powerful witness of the apostles was overwhelming evidence that demanded their response. They were convicted of their sins. They asked Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

Look at verse 38. Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Peter told them that if they repented and were baptized in the name of Jesus, they would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Any person who repents and is baptized can receive forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Look at verse 39. “This promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off--for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

Jesus forgives our sins. The Holy Spirit comes into our hearts to dwell. He gives us victory over sin and enables us to live a new life with the Risen Christ. Peter must have been overwhelmed by his own message as he was delivering it to those who had crucified Jesus. He went on and on, warning them and pleading with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." Look at verse 41. "Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day." Suddenly the early church increased in number 25 times, from about 120 members to 3,120 members.

Today we learn that Jesus was exalted to the right hand of God as Lord and Messiah. Now God works through the Holy Spirit to save many sinful people of the world. When we repent of our sins and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit we can participate in this glorious work of God. May God help us to be powerful witnesses of Jesus' resurrection!